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Long-time Wine Industry Leader to Leave Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association

Livermore Valley, Calif. (December 9, 2020)—Chris Chandler, the longest serving executive director of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association (LVWA), will be leaving at the end of the year. She has led the non-profit marketing and membership organization representing wineries, vineyards and businesses in Livermore Valley since the spring of 2007.

“We have appreciated Chris’ guidance and her capacity through the years to stand with all the wineries, both large and small. Her ability to forge a path through the middle, that benefits everybody has been tremendous. She leaves behind numerous legacies in the Valley,” said Darcie Kent, proprietor of Darcie Kent Vineyards. Her partner, David Kent, noted, “One legacy that stands out in particular is how Chris got up and got going on the downtown wine country hotel. It would have been a very different outcome without her leadership, attention and ability to mobilize a broad section of the community to stand up for what is right and do what was needed to advance our wine country.”

In 2019, *Diablo Magazine* featured Chandler as one of “three female power players bringing their A games to our local wine region.” She was devoted to LVWA members and prioritized community and collaboration. Chandler served for several years on the board of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Foundation, which hosts the annual charity auction; the Las Positas College Viticulture & Enology program advisory board, East Bay-Economic Development Alliance (EB-EDA) Marketing and Land Use committees and the Visit Tri-Valley board of directors.

“Chris has always been willing to partner and advocate on behalf of the hoteliers and wineries in the region,” said Tracy Farhad, CEO of Visit Tri-Valley. “She has served seven years as an invaluable director on the Visit Tri-Valley board, and has long understood and contributed to the larger, regional and national marketing efforts. We will miss her.”

Under Chandler’s direction, and for the first time in the Association’s history, LVWA pursued and won two grants to support regional marketing. The grants awarded by the United States Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Food and Agriculture totaled just under half a million dollars.

Rachael Snedecor, executive director of Livermore Downtown, Inc. (LDI), said, “Chris and her team established a highly successful media relations program. She always took a collaborative approach and reached out to invite LDI to join in Winegrowers-sponsored FAM tours and media visits to the benefit of not only the wineries but downtown restaurants and businesses as well.”

Alameda County District Supervisor Scott Haggerty remembers, “We worked with Chris and her team back in 2009 to ensure that they could successfully establish the wine country signage program throughout the Valley.”

Chandler also successfully led the organization through one of the worst economic recessions on record. “It hasn’t always been easy. The Great Recession of 2008-2009 was difficult on wine regions all over the state, including Livermore Valley, she said. “It was nothing like the hardships of this pandemic, but I am confident that the region’s history, creativity, dedication and heart will carry the Valley forward.”

Among Chandler’s other important legacies are her work on paving a path to establish the Wine Heritage District that will secure sustainable, long-term funding for marketing the region and the expansion of Taste our Terroir from a single night event into an iconic, four-day celebration of local wine country.

“It’s been an honor and privilege to represent Livermore Valley’s wineries and vineyards for almost 14 years,” said Chandler. “I’m so proud of everything the members, team, board and I have accomplished together!”

“The Association thanks Chris for her leadership and dedication over the past 13+ years and we all wish her only the best,” said Amy Hoopes, president of Wentz Family Estates and two-term LVWA board president.

Long-time LVWA Operations and Membership Director Brandi Addington will oversee the organization with support from the board of directors for the foreseeable future.

About the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association

The Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association is a 501(c)6 organization that supports the wineries, growers and members in the Livermore Valley American Viticultural Area through educational and marketing programs. For more information, please visit www.LVwine.org

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